

‘Iolani School Captures National Title

Mar 21, 2009 06:40 PM - Governor Lingle announced that a high school team from Hawai‘i has captured the national championship title in the U.S. Department of Energy’s 2009 Real World Design Challenge (RWDC).

‘Iolani School’s Team “NDC” beat out nine other high school teams from nine different states to earn the nation’s top title in the competition held at the Air and Space Museum’s iMax Theater in Washington, D.C.

The six-member, all-girl team from ‘Iolani prevailed as one of the top three finalists this afternoon, along with teams from Pennsylvania and Massachusetts. After presenting their project at the finals held at Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum this evening, the ‘Iolani team was named the national champion.

“We feel like we’re dreaming!” said team member Jessica Lynn Saylors, a senior at ‘Iolani School. “What an honor to have had the opportunity to compete, but winning the national championship makes it even better.”

The RWDC is a national learning program that challenges teams of teachers and students to develop innovative solutions to significant technical problems as defined by the aerospace industry. This year’s challenge presented high school teams with detailed specifications and performance capabilities of an existing twin-engine jet aircraft, and then asked students to redesign the plane to improve its fuel efficiency without drastically reducing the load capacity, flying time, or any other characteristics of the original aircraft.

In order to succeed, teams were challenged to balance the competing forces of aerodynamics, propulsion, structures and controls, with each particular element of the redesign process being assigned to an individual team member. Success depended on strong science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills – in combination with effective, innovative and sustained teamwork.

Governor Lingle applauded the efforts of all students, teachers and mentors who engaged in this competition, noting that the RWDC is helping Hawai‘i’s youth obtain the critical STEM skills they will need to succeed in their professional careers, while helping to develop a diversified, innovation-based economy.

“Innovation is a key component in growing our economy and ensuring our workforce has the skills and knowledge to succeed in an increasingly competitive global market,” Governor Lingle said. “The Real World Design Challenge is another innovative hands-on learning program that provides our students with opportunities to apply science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM skills, to develop solutions to actual challenges facing our industries.



Team members from left: Julia Zhang, Jessica Lynn Saylors, Dr. Carey Inouye (Coach), Amy Ko, Anya Liao, Celia Ou, Adeline Li, Jeff Bloom (Hawai‘i RWDC coordinator).